

**Fifth Sunday of Easter
Zion
April 28, 2024**

Prelude – Vickie Sowers, Now the Green Blade Rises

Thanksgiving for Baptism

(All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins).

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
the wellspring of grace,
our Easter and our joy.

Amen.

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

Immersed in the promises of baptism,
let us give thanks for what God has done for us.
We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning
your voice thundered over the deep
and water became the essence of life.

Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers.

The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day.
Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea
into freedom's land.

In a desert pool the Ethiopian official
entered your boundless baptismal life.

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John
and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection
you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love,
freeing us to live as Easter people.

We rejoice with glad hearts,
giving all honor and praise to you,
through the risen Christ, our source of living water,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

Opening Song – We Know That Christ Is Raised

1 We know that Christ is raised and dies no more.
Embraced by death, he broke its fearful hold,
and our despair he turned to blazing joy.
Hallelujah!

ELW 449

- 2 We share by water in his saving death.
Reborn, we share with him an Easter life,
as living members of our Savior Christ.
Hallelujah!
- 3 The Father's splendor clothes the Son with life.
The Spirit's fission shakes the church of God.
Baptized, we live with God the Three in One.
Hallelujah!
- 4 A new creation comes to life and grows
as Christ's new body takes on flesh and blood.
The universe restored and whole will sing:
Hallelujah!

Text: John B. Geyer, b. 1932

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Greeting

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also, with you.**

Kyrie – ELW 120

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen, amen.**

Hymn of Praise – This is the feast ELW

p. 122

Refrain

This is the feast of vic - to-ry for our God. Al - le -

lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us

free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er, rich-es, wis-dom, and

strength, and hon-or, bless-ing, and glo-ry are his.

Refrain

This is the feast of vic - to-ry for our God. Al - le -

lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

2 Sing with all the peo-ple of God, and join in the

hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing, hon-or, glo-ry, and

might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Final refrain

This is the feast of vic - to-ry for our God,

for the Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer of the Day - O God, you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Acts 8:26-40

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²⁶An angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." ³⁰So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³²Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth."

³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" ³⁸He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 22:25-31

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²⁵From you comes my praise in the great assembly;
I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the Lord.

**²⁶The poor shall eat and be satisfied,
Let those who seek the Lord give praise! May your hearts live forever!**

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord;
all the families of nations shall bow before God.

**²⁸For dominion belongs to the Lord,
who rules over the nations.**

²⁹Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship;
all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the Lord.

**³⁰Their descendants shall serve the Lord,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying to them, "The Lord has acted!"

Second Reading: 1 John 4:7-21

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⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our

sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. ¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. ²¹The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel: John 15:1-8

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The Holy Gospel according John the 15th Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] ¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples." The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon: Pastor Wanda Childs

Prayers of the People

Response: God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Sharing of the Peace

Offertory - Amid the World's Bleak Wilderness, Choir

Offering Prayer

Risen One,
you call us to believe and bear fruit.
May the gifts that we offer here
be signs of your abiding love.
Form us to be your witnesses in the world,
through Jesus Christ, our true vine.

Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy....

...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

The risen Christ is made known to us
in the breaking of the bread.
Come and eat at God's table.

Lamb of God

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

Prayer after Communion

Shepherding God,
you have prepared a table before us
and nourished us with your love.
Send us forth from this banquet
to proclaim your goodness
and share the abundant mercy of Jesus,
our redeemer and friend. **Amen.**

Blessing

God bless you and keep you,
shower you with mercy,
fill you with courage,
and \pm give you peace. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn: *Let All Things Now Living*

ELW 881

- 1 Let all things now living
a song of thanksgiving
to God the creator triumphantly raise,
who fashioned and made us,
protected and stayed us,
who still guides us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us,
God's light goes before us,
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night,
till shadows have vanished
and darkness is banished,
as forward we travel from light into light.

- 2 God rules all the forces:
the stars in their courses
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains,
the rivers and fountains,
the deeps of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We too should be voicing
our love and rejoicing;
with glad adoration a song let us raise
till all things now living
unite in thanksgiving:
"To God in the highest, hosanna and praise!"

Text: Katherine K. Davis, 1892-1980, alt.

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Dismissal

Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad. **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

Postlude: Vickie Sowers – *At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing*

Pastor Parish Office Hours This week: Wednesday, 5/1/24, 11:45-3:45 pm

In addition to these office hours, Pastor Wanda is also available to meet with anyone by appointment.
(Text or call 304.920.5965)

Prayers for the People: Wayne Pennell, husband of BJ Bauermeister; Joe Sowers, husband of Vickie, Luca Gucciardo, son Of Michael, owner of Mickey G's; Keel Frost, friend of the Gardner's granddaughter, Autumn Scott, granddaughter of Rosemary Wyman; Nancy Conduff, daughter of Nadine Rutrough: Roger Slusher, husband of Leslie; Rebecca Mchan, friend of Rhonda Daiber

Noisy Offering will be taken today to benefit the Plenty Farm/Food Bank.

An Invitation - Holy Communion: All are welcome to this table. Whether you belong to this church, or another church, or no church at all, the gift of this bread and wine, and Christ's real presence are for us all. Your Children are welcome. You do not need to be a certain age to receive the gift of God at this table. Those not communing may come forward for a blessing. Crossing your arms in front of your chest (sign language for love) will let us know you would like a blessing. Please let the usher know if you would like communion brought to you.

We also celebrate the gifts of God's grace and love in **Holy Baptism**. If you have not been Baptized and would like to be, please contact the church office to visit with our pastor. The Gifts of God for the people of God. Come for all is ready!

Thank you to Daniel Bower for serving as Reader today, to Walter Way for serving as Reader. We need volunteers for several Sundays in May. Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall.

Floyd Empty Bowls, Today, April 28th, 11 am – 2 pm, Floyd County High School-Annual fundraiser for Floyd Backpack Program which provides food for Floyd County children during the weekends. You will receive a bowl crafted by a local potter, with soup, bread, drink and dessert. Tickets are available at multiple locations in Floyd or online at www.facebook.com/FloydBackPack/ \$25-adults, \$10-children ages 6-12 with no bowl. Free-children under age 5 with no bowl.

Power in the Spirit-Hosted at beautiful Roanoke College in Salem Virginia, Power in the Spirit is an inspirational conference for everyone who wishes to explore God's call to service through joyous worship, Bible Study, keynote addresses, workshops, and fellowship. The Rev. Ce Cee Mills will be the Keynote Speaker; Rev. Heidi Neumark will be the Bible Study Leader and Michael Benshish will be our Musician. Join with friends from across Virginia and beyond at Roanoke College from June 13-15. For more information and to register for the early bird discount until April 29th, visit the vasynod.org website.

National Lutheran Choir Concert – Enjoy the spring concert **today** at 5 pm by visiting the website nlca.com to livestream the free concert with soloists, choirs and a chamber orchestra.

Welcoming Statement - *The Floyd-Willis Parish recognizes that each of us is a unique creation made in the image of God. We celebrate and welcome into our ministry persons of every race, culture, age, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, and economic status. We commit ourselves to the work of anti-racism, social and economic justice, and environmental care, embracing the beauty and diversity of all God's creatures. We believe that through our openness we all grow in faith through Christ's teaching to love one another as God loves us.*

